Consumer grievance redressal mechanism with companies

2307. SHRl V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Govemment are aware that most companies avoid giving any geographical or correspondence address to consumers;

(b) whether Govemment are aware that consumers do not have any address of companies where they can personally go and lodge their consumer grievances;

(c) whether Government have taken steps to ensure that all companies give their actual addresses, phone numbers and other such details;

(d) to what extent companies have been hiding behind call centres to avoid any direct interaction with customers; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that all commercial entities publish their physical addresses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (e) The Companies Act, 1956 provides for declaration of addresses by a company in its business transactions. Section 147 of the Companies Act, 1956 provides, *inter-alia,* that every company shall have its name and the address of its registered office mentioned in legible characters in all its business letters, in all its bill heads and letter paper, and in all its notices and other official publications and also have its name so mentioned in all bills of exchange, hundies, promissory notes, endorsements, cheques and orders for money or goods purporting to be signed by or on behalf of the company, and in all bills of parcels, invoices, receipts and letters of credit of the company.

Besides, the Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules 1977 provide that every package kept, offered or exposed for sale or sold, shall bear conspicuously on the package, the name and complete address of the manufacturer or where the manufacturer is not the packer, the name and address of the manufacturer and the packer. After a recent amendment to these Rules, every package is required to bear the name, address, telephone number, E-mail address,

if available, of the person who can be or the office which can be contacted in case of consumer complaints. Non-compliance with the above provisions entails fine up to Rs. 5,000/- for the first offence and imprisonment for a term which may extend to 5 years for subsequent offence under the provisions of the Standard of Weights and Measures Act, 1976.

Ration to BPL and APL families

2308. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of BPL and APL families in different States and Union Territories;

(b) the number of Antyodaya families, State and UT-wise; and

(c) the quantity of ration being issued according to the size of different category of families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) A Statement showing the number of BPL, APL and AAY families in different States and Union Territories is annexed (See below).

(c) The norms for central allocation/issue of foodgrains for all categories at present is 35 kgs. per household.

Sugar supplied under the Public Distribution System (PDS) has been restricted to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families in all States/UTs except the Northern Eastern States, Hill States and Island Territories with effect from 01.02.2001. The minimum per head per month quantum of levy sugar allotted under the PDS was increased from 425 gms to 500 gms with effect from 01.02.2001. The responsibility of regulating supply of sugar through the Public Distribution System and maintaining smooth operation of PDS in the States, lies with the respective State Government.

PDS kerosene is an allocated product. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas makes allocation to States/UTs for further distribution under the Public Distribution System (PDS) network. The quantity of PDS kerosene for distribution per card holder is decided by concerned State Govt./UT and the same varies from State to State.